

# Presentation on the situation of older persons in Uganda in regards to Evidence based Policy making



**PRESENTED BY  
AJIAMBO EMILY  
SENIOR GERONTOLOGIST  
MINISTRY OF GENDER, LABOUR AND  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
KAMPALA.**

# INTRODUCTION



- Uganda adopted the UN definition of older persons as those aged 60 years and above.
- According to the 1991 Uganda Population and Housing Census, the population of older persons was 686,260 (4.1%) of the total population of 16,671,705.
- This population increased to 1,101,039 (4.6%) as per the Uganda Population and Housing Census results of 2002.
- The just concluded National Housing and Population census indicates that older persons constitute 3.7% of the entire population of 34.6 Million people (UBOS 2016).

# Economic Situation



- The majority of older persons live in rural areas where poverty is rife, economic opportunities are limited.
- About 85% of the active older persons are engaged in crop farming with no social security, rendering them totally vulnerable.
- Their economic situation is worsened by the burden of looking after orphans and other vulnerable children left by the youth who have succumbed to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

# Social Security



- the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) covers only a small percentage of the workforce in Uganda.
- The empirical evidence reveals that only 7.1% of older persons have access to pension, of which 60% are males
- The few beneficiaries of pensions face multiple difficulties in processing their retirement benefits though the process has now been decentralised and now pensioners receive their benefits from the last point of employment they served before retirement.

# Health



- Common health problems of the older persons include hypertension, stroke, diabetes, heart diseases, trachoma and blindness that often lead to complications and permanent incapacitation.
- Older persons can hardly afford the costs of travelling to the health facilities at the sub-district or in urban centres where they could access the comprehensive Uganda National Minimum Health Care Package provided by the Health Sector

# HIV/AIDS



- Older persons are sexually active, caretakers of HIV and AIDS patients and many are sexually assaulted.
- Lack of family support or approval of older persons to marry leads them to secret sexual engagement, which exposes them to HIV and AIDS infection.
- Whereas Government has a strategic framework for coordination and implementation of HIV and AIDS interventions, most of them do not deliberately target older persons

# Legal and Policy Frameworks on Older Persons



- The Constitution of Uganda recognizes the rights of older persons and provides the basis for the enactment of laws and development of policies that address their concerns. The National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy of The Constitution stipulates that “The State will make reasonable provision for the welfare and maintenance of the aged”.
- Article 32 of the Constitution states that:  
“Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, the State will take affirmative action in favour of groups marginalized on the basis of gender, age, disability or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom, for the purpose of redressing imbalances which exist against them”.

# Legal and Policy Frameworks on Older Persons



- The Local Governments Act (Cap 243). Section 10(1) (f) provides for two older persons, a male and female, elected by Structures of the Council to represent them in the local governments' councils. The National Council for Older Persons will provide a structure through which free and fair elections will be conducted at any level of Local government.
- The National Council for Older Persons Act, 2013 became law after it was assented to by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2012 and Commenced on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2013. The Council offers a platform for advocacy, lobbying and monitoring the implementation of the legal and policy frameworks concerning older persons.

# Legal and Policy Frameworks on Older Persons.



- The Local Governments Act (Cap 243). Section 10(1) (f) provides for two older persons, a male and female, elected by Structures of the Council to represent them in the local governments' councils. The National Council for Older Persons will provide a structure through which free and fair elections will be conducted at any level of Local government.
- The National Council for Older Persons Act, 2013 became law after it was assented to by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda on 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2012 and Commenced on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2013. The Council offers a platform for advocacy, lobbying and monitoring the implementation of the legal and policy frameworks concerning older persons.
- The National Policy for Older Persons (2009) provides for the establishment of a National Council for Older Persons to coordinate various stakeholders involved in the implementation of programmes for older persons.

# Programmes for older persons in Uganda.



- The Expanding Social Protection Programme. This was started in 2010 with two major components
- 1. Development of a Social Protection System in Uganda.
- 2. Provision of cash transfers to vulnerable groups which culminated into the Senior Citizens Grants.

# Expanding Social Protection programme



- The Senior Citizens receive a monthly cash transfer of UGX 25,000 to older persons aged 65 years and above.
- The programme is currently in 20 districts.
- Under the development of a strong social protection system, the Ministry has developed a National Social Protection Policy that will guide delivery of social protection interventions in Uganda.

# National Council for Older Persons



- In 2013, the President assented to the bill that ushered in the establishment of the National Council for Older Persons. The Act provides for representation of older persons at all local council levels.
- In the just concluded elections, older persons were for the first time elected at various levels.

# Data on older persons.



- Uganda still faces challenges on data collection for older persons. This has been attributed to;
- 1. Limited understanding of older persons issues by many organisations that are mandated to collect data.
- Definitions of older persons which are varying (WHO 50+ UN 60+)
- Uganda's population is dominated by the young population therefore focus is on the youth and children
- As a result, the Ministry mainly uses administrative data and conducts research studies on specific topics which later on inform planning.

# Plans to improve data on older persons.



- The Ministry is planning to develop an Information Management System to improve on the collection and analysis of mainly administrative data so that it can be used in planning and development of interventions on older persons.
- Develop specific questions to be used during the Household Surveys to generate specific data on older persons.